

## **Frequently Asked Questions - Town Manager's Office**

### **What is the primary role of the Town Manager?**

The Town Manager is the chief administrative head for all town departments except the public library, which is governed by a separate Board of Trustees. These departments include Police, Fire/EMS, Public Works, Water/Sewer, Parks/Recreation, Planning, Code Enforcement, Welfare, Finance, and Tax Collection.

The Town has other officials elected directly by the people such as the Treasurer and the Town Clerk, and these offices work with, but do not report to, the Town Manager. The Town Manager has oversight over the daily operations of the Town government with the exceptions noted.

### **Who does the Town Manager report to?**

The Town Manager is appointed by, and reports to the 5-member Board of Selectmen.

### **Is there an RSA (state law) that addresses the Town Manager position?**

Yes. The Town Manager is specifically referenced in [RSA 37](#), also known as the "Town Manager Plan." The general and specific duties and authority of the Town Manager are described in this statute.

### **How do I get an appointment to see the Town Manager?**

Appointments can be made by contacting the Town Manager's assistant, Sheri Riffle, at [sriffle \[at\] exeternh \[dot\] gov](mailto:sriffle@exeternh.gov) or by phone at (603)-778-0591 x102.

### **What are the hours of the Town Manager's Office?**

The Town Manager's Office is open 8:00 a.m. until 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday.

### **I have an issue and I want to go "right to the top." Is this how business is handled?**

Generally, depending on the issue, the Town Manager's Office will refer requests to the respective department. If the issue or question cannot be handled by the respective department, the Town Manager's Office is available to review the situation and further follow up.

### **Can I reach the Board of Selectmen through the Town Manager's Office?**

Yes. Requests to the Board can be addressed to Board of Selectmen, 10 Front Street, Exeter, NH 03833. You can also email [selectmen \[at\] exeternh \[dot\] gov](mailto:selectmen@exeternh.gov).

### **I would like to be on a Selectmen's agenda. Who do I contact?**

The easiest way is to contact the Town Manager's Office and make a request. The Selectmen's agenda is prepared by the Board Chair working with the Town Manager. Requests must describe the issue and topic for discussion for proper placement on the agenda. Backup materials may be requested.

Most public input is reserved for the public comment section of the meeting.

### **How frequently do the Selectmen meet?**

The Board generally meets every other Monday, although depending on the season they may meet more frequently or as needed to conduct Town business.

### **I am confused about whether my emails to the Board of Selectmen or a member of the Board, or the Town Manager, are public. Are they?**

Generally emails sent to Board members, the Town Manager, or the Town Manager's assistant, from members of the public, should be considered public. There are few exceptions to this, such as if something involves town personnel. Depending on the subject matter emails and correspondence may or may not be addressed or included in the Selectmen's packet.

### **When do the Selectmen meet in non-public session?**

The Selectmen can only meet in non public session under the exceptions noted in [RSA 91-A](#), the right to know

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law. These include employee compensation, potential litigation, and sale or acquisition of real estate. A full list of exceptions are noted in [RSA 91-A](#).

### **What is a non-meeting?**

A non-meeting is reserved for collective bargaining discussions or advice from counsel. These are not considered meetings under the right to know law.

### **Are Selectmen's packets online?**

Yes. Packets are generally posted online the Monday morning before a Monday evening meeting.

### **How is the Town Manager involved in the Town budget process?**

The Town Manager prepares a preliminary budget, which is forwarded each September to the Board of Selectmen and Budget Recommendations Committee for review. The Budget Recommendations Committee reviews all budget requests and makes recommendations to the Selectmen. The Selectmen then prepare the state budget forms and hold the necessary public hearings each January on the budget. The budget is discussed at deliberative session, and voted on by the voters each March. The Town Manager attends and participates in all budget meetings. It should be noted the NH RSA's require a budget be prepared by the Town Manager by late January, however, due to the needs of the budget calendar this is typically done much earlier.

### **Is the Town Manager involved in collective bargaining?**

Yes. The Town Manager leads bargaining efforts. The Board of Selectmen must approve all labor contracts, and the Town Meeting must approve all cost items included in any proposed labor contracts. The Town has three bargaining units covering police officers and sergeants, firefighters including Lieutenants, and public works personnel and some town office personnel.

### **I have a question involving streets and roads, pedestrian safety, or speeding. Should I go to the Town Manager?**

It depends. Usually traffic and pedestrian issues are handled by the Police Department or Public Works Department. However if your issue involves a change to a town ordinance, such as parking, the Board of Selectmen are the governing authority and you should go through the Town Manager on such an issue.

### **I want to review our Town Ordinances on things like dogs, bicycles, and noise. Where do I find these?**

Here is a link to the [Town Ordinances](#) under our Town Manager Section.

### **I want the Selectmen to consider adopting or changing an ordinance. What is the process?**

You can write the Board a letter asking them to take up the issue. Town Ordinances that are proposed for a change will include public hearings and input, and up to three readings at a meeting prior to adoption.

### **I want to use a Town facility for a gathering or a meeting. Should I go through the Town Manager?**

For use of the Town Hall or a room in the Town Office at 10 Front Street, [yes](#). For use of the Senior Center or a Parks/Recreation building, [contact Parks/Recreation](#) directly. Keep in mind there are renters rules for the Town Hall, which require a certificate of insurance from an individual or organization. The Town Hall calendar is maintained by the Town Manager's Assistant, Sheri Riffle. She can be reached at [sriffle\[at\]exeternh\[dot\]gov](mailto:sriffle@exeternh.gov). Permits are required for use of any Town facility.

### **I want to use Swasey Parkway. Who do I contact?**

The land on Swasey Parkway is governed under a trust by three elected Trustees. A property use permit from the Trustees is required to use Swasey Parkway under their rules and regulations. [More information is on the Town website.](#)

Any event that involves the actual parkway road also involves approval for road closure through the Town Manager's Office under the direction of the Selectmen.

## **Web Links**

[NH Municipal Managers Association](#)[ICMA NH Local Government Center](#)[National League of Cities](#)[NH Center for Public Policy Studies](#)

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